

INITIATION INTO ISAIAH

by

J. Vernon McGee, Th.D., LL.D.

Copyright @ 1960

CHAPTER THIRTY

THEME:

Judah admonished not to turn to Egypt for help against the Assyrian, but to turn to the Lord for He has glorious things planned for their future.

REMARKS:

This is largely a local situation which is presented in this chapter, and the larger prophecy of the future grows out of it.

There is no record that the Southern Kingdom of Judah brought their doom by uniting with Egypt. On the other hand, the Northern Kingdom of Israel did (II Kings 17:4). Obviously this prophecy concerns the Southern Kingdom of Judah, "**Zion at Jerusalem**" (verse 19).

It is a warning in the form of a prophecy yet to be fulfilled. Will Israel turn to Egypt as an ally against a future enemy? At the moment this seems unlikely. We know from other prophecies that Israel will turn for help to an outside source against the king of the north. Could not Egypt here represent that power to which the total nation of Israel will turn for help in the future day?

The use of the nation Egypt could be explained because the danger in Isaiah's day was in turning to Egypt. Jennings takes the position that Egypt here is used figuratively. This may or may not be true.

This chapter has much instruction given to Israel to turn to the Lord for help. This is especially impressive in view of the future blessing God has in store for His people. After all, it will be the Lord who will deliver them from the final enemy.

OUTLINE:

1. **ADMONITION**—A Warning Not to Seek an Alliance with Egypt. Verses 1-14
2. **EXHORTATION**—An Encouragement to Look to the Lord for He is Willing and Will Deliver. Verses 15-26
3. **DECLARATION**—A Statement that God will Deal with the Assyrian of the Future. Verses 27-33

COMMENT:

Verse 1—Woe to the rebellious children, saith the Lord, that take counsel, but not of me; and that cover with a covering, but not of my spirit, that they may add sin to sin:

Verse 2—That walk to go down into Egypt, and have not asked at my mouth; to strengthen themselves in the strength of Pharaoh, and to trust in the shadow of Egypt!

This is the fourth woe. It is a woe because it is a warning. The prophecy that the entire nation of Israel will turn to Egypt in the future with dire results is a red signal for the present. Instead of turning to their Lord, they turn intuitively to Egypt, the very place from which they were delivered.

Surely there is an analogy here for the Christian who has been delivered from the world, he is still in the world but not of the world. There is always the ever present danger of turning back into the world, living like the world and leaning upon the supports of the world.

Verse 3—Therefore shall the strength of Pharaoh be your shame, and the trust in the shadow of Egypt your confusion.

God warns them again that Egypt is no real strength or ally for; them. It is merely a mirage on the desert of adversity.

Verse 4—For his princes were at Zoan, and his ambassadors came to Hanes.

This is a picture of ambassadors advancing on Egypt for assistance.

Zoan is *Tanis*—along the delta of the Nile,
Hanes is Heracleopolis—farther up the Nile.

Verse 5—They were all ashamed of a people that could not profit them, nor be an help nor profit, but a shame, and also a reproach.

The mission of the ambassadors was futile.

Verse 6—The burden of the beasts of the south: into the land of trouble and anguish, from whence come the young and old lion, the viper and fiery flying serpent, they will carry their riches upon the shoulders of young asses, and their treasures upon the bunches of camels, to a people that shall not profit them.

This seems to be an apt description of the wild animals of the jungles of Africa.

Verse 7—For the Egyptians shall help in vain, and to no purpose: therefore have I cried concerning this, Their strength is to sit still.

The prophet continues to warn against Egypt.

Verse 8—Now go, write it before them in a table, and note it in a book, that it may be for the time to come for ever and ever:

Verse 9—That this is a rebellious people, lying children, children that will not hear the law of the Lord:

Verse 10—Which say to the seers, See not; and to the prophets, Prophecy not unto us right things, speak unto us smooth things, prophesy deceits:

Verse 11 —Get you out of the way, turn aside out of the path, cause the Holy One of Israel to cease from before us.

Verse 12—Wherefore thus saith the Holy One of Israel, Because ye despise this word, and trust in oppression and perverseness, and stay thereon:

Verse 13—Therefore this iniquity shall be to you as a breach ready to fall, swelling out in a high wall, whose breaking cometh suddenly at an instant.

Verse 14—And he shall break it as the breaking of the potters' vessel that is broken in pieces; he shall not spare: so that there shall not be found in the bursting of it a sherd to take fire from the hearth, or to take water withal out of the pit.

The prophet was to put this prophecy in writing that it might be a witness against the people. They would not hear, and when the judgment comes in the final day, the prophecy of Isaiah will stand against them as God's charge.

Verse 15—For thus saith the Lord God, the Holy One of Israel; In returning and rest shall ye be saved; in quietness and in confidence shall be your strength: and ye would not.

This is another one of the great spiritual principles with which Isaiah abounds. This is a good exhortation for any age, especially this age of tension which seeks rest in tranquilizing pills.

Verse 16—But ye said, No; for we will flee upon horses; therefore shall ye flee: and, We will ride upon the swift; therefore shall they that pursue you be swift.

Verse 17—One thousand shall flee at the rebuke of one; at the rebuke of five shall ye flee: till ye be left as a beacon upon the top of a mountain, and as an ensign on an hill.

The people insist upon depending on the instrumentalities of this world. The Christian needs to remind himself continually that **the weapons of his warfare are not carnal.**

Verse 18—And therefore will the Lord wait, that he may be gracious unto you, and therefore will he be exalted, that he may have mercy upon you: for the Lord is a God of judgment: blessed are all they that wait for him.

Here is another of the great gems of truth.

Verse 19—For the people shall dwell in Zion at Jerusalem: thou shalt weep no more: he will be very gracious unto thee at the voice of thy cry; when he shall hear it, he will answer thee.

Verse 20—And though the Lord give you the bread of adversity, and the water of affliction, yet shall not thy teachers be removed into a corner any more, but thine eyes shall see thy teachers:

Verse 21—And thine ears shall hear a word behind thee, saying, This is the way, walk ye in it, when ye turn to the right hand, and when ye turn to the left.

Verse 22—Ye shall defile also the covering of thy graven images of silver, and the ornament of thy molten images of gold: thou shalt cast them away as a menstruous cloth; thou shalt say unto it, Get thee hence.

Verse 23—Then shall he give the rain of thy seed, that thou shalt sow the ground withal; and bread of the increase of the earth, and it shall be fat and plenteous: in that day shall thy cattle feed in large pastures.

Verse 24—The oxen likewise and the young asses that ear the ground shall eat clean provender, which hath been winnowed with the shovel and with the fan.

Verse 25—And there shall be upon every high mountain, and upon every high hill, rivers and streams of waters in the day of the great slaughter, when the towers fall.

The prophet begins to move into the rich benefits of the coming kingdom. These should encourage His people to turn to Him, as He alone can give present help and future benefits.

The blessings here are material and physical and are all in relationship to this earth. This is proper because the Kingdom is the Kingdom of Heaven on earth.

Verse 26—Moreover the light of the moon shall be as the light of the sun, and the light of the sun shall be sevenfold, as the light of seven days, in the day that the Lord bindeth up the breach of his people, and healeth the stroke of their wound.

It is interesting to note the intensity of the light coming to the earth from the solar system.

This necessitates a radical change in the present structure of our solar system. It also suggests that there will be radical changes made in the bodies of men who enter the kingdom. Our present bodies are actually hothouse plants.

Verse 27—Behold, the name of the Lord cometh from far, burning with his anger, and the burden thereof is heavy: his lips are full of indignation, and his tongue as a devouring fire:

Verse 28—And his breath, as an overflowing stream, shall reach to the midst of the neck, to sift the nations with the sieve of vanity: and there shall be a bridle in the jaws of the people, causing them to err.

This is a vivid and pictorial description of the second coming of Christ (compare Revelation 19:11-16).

Verse 29—Ye shall have a song, as in the night when a holy solemnity is kept; and gladness of heart, as when one goeth with a pipe to come into the mountain of the Lord, to the mighty One of Israel.

Verse 30—And the Lord shall cause his glorious voice to be heard, and shall shew the lighting down of his arm, with the indignation of his anger, and with the flame of a devouring fire, with scattering, and tempest, and hailstones.

Again we are in the midst of the Millennium. The fires of judgment have not entirely burned out. The time has come for singing. (See Revelation 14:1-3). There we see those who came through the Great Tribulation singing a new song.

Verse 31—For through the voice of the Lord shall the Assyrian be beaten down, which smote with a rod.

Verse 32—And in every place where the grounded staff shall pass, which the Lord shall lay upon him, it shall be with tabrets and harps: and in battles of shaking will he fight with it.

Verse 33—For Tophet is ordained of old; yea, for the king it is prepared; he hath made it deep and large: the pile thereof is fire and much wood; the breath of the Lord, like a stream of brimstone, doth kindle it.

The Assyrian here is the final enemy of God in the Great Tribulation. “**Tophet**” was a place in the Valley of the son of Hinnon where the most abominable idolatries were practiced. Little children were offered as sacrifices. It speaks here of the worst spot in the lake of fire.

“The king” here is “the beast” and the false prophet.

And the devil that deceived them was cast into the lake of fire and brimstone, where the beast and the false prophet are, and shall be tormented day and night for ever and ever (Revelation 20:10).

This is a solemn and somber note upon which to close this chapter. Let us turn back and read verse 18 for our final thought:

And therefore will the Lord wait, that he may be gracious unto you, and therefore will he be exalted, that he may have mercy upon you: for the Lord is a God of judgment: blessed are all they that wait for him (Isaiah 30:18).

THE MINORITY REPORT OF THE EARLY CHURCH

CLEMENT of Rome (A.D. 95):—"Let us be followers of those who went about in goatskins and sheepskins, preaching the Coming of Christ."

IGNATIUS of Antioch (A.D. 100):—"Consider the times, and expect Him who is above all time."

POLYCARP of Ephesus (A.D. 108):—"God has raised up our Lord Jesus from the dead, and He will come to judge the world and raise the saints; when, if we walk worthy of Him, we shall reign together with Him."

JUSTIN MARTYR (A.D. 150):—"They are destitute of just reason who do not understand that which is clear from all the Scriptures, that two comings of Christ are announced."

IRENÆUS (A.D. 180):—"The Lord shall come from Heaven in the clouds, with the glory of His Father, casting antichrist and them that obey him into the lake of fire, but bringing to the just the times of the Kingdom."

~ end of chapter 30 ~

<http://www.baptistbiblebelievers.com/>
